



FIRST THINGS FIRST

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Arizona Early Childhood Development and Health Board La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council Meeting Minutes

Call to Order/Welcome/Introduction of Guests

The regular meeting of the La Paz/Mohave Regional Partnership Council was held on October 18, 2012, at 9:30 a.m. at the Lake Havasu Unified School District Board Room, 2200 Havasupai Boulevard, Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403.

Chairman Frei called the meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. Council members, staff and guests introduced themselves.

Members Present

Riley Frei, Lenore Knudtson, Howard Weiske, Terri Holloway, Nancy Mongeau, Alisa Burroughs, Catie Sondrol, Debra Weger and Jose Garcia

Members Absent

Vijette Saari, Betsy Lewis

Call to the Public

There were no responses to the Call to the Public.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Member Mongeau made a motion to approve the September 27, 2012 meeting minutes. Member Holloway seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Report from Chair/Vice-Chair Leadership Forum

Chair Frei reported the forum was good, and asked Director Beckett to elaborate. Director Beckett explained that the forum was mainly about the regional allocations, the sustainability analysis, a detail of the state fund balance, and discussion about the setting of regional benchmarks. Senior Director Arnold added that there was also discussion about the robust evaluation plan for the upcoming year. Chair Frei pointed out that Quality First has been a struggle in many regions – not just ours. He also noted that two of the indicators our Council chose for the benchmarks will not have data available for some time.

Review and Discussion of 2012 Regional Needs & Assets Report

Director Beckett reviewed the data snapshot, which is meant to identify some of the key indicators of early childhood health and development for the region. The vaccination rate is significantly lower than where we want it to be, although Member Holloway thinks that rate is underreported. Director Beckett believes we have a significant support system in place with our strategies, but suggested there may be issues that we could highlight with our partners, i.e. promoting education or outreach around particular concerns like oral health. Member Knudtson inquired whether the La Paz/Mohave data includes local Tribal communities, and Director Beckett advised those are separated out whenever possible. Member Knudtson pointed out the large disparity between the number of children under 6 in the region in relation to the capacity of licensed/regulated child care. In relation to the Council's discussion last month regarding star ratings, the direction that the state has chosen to go could result in a negative effect in the region. Chair Frei noted wages are low and the cost of child care is too high. Director Beckett said this is probably why we see such a large amount of family, friend and neighbor care in this region. Member Knudtson said this forces children into unregulated care, rather than higher quality regulated care. Senior Director Arnold advised there is a meeting scheduled Monday to address the formula for reimbursement in rural areas. Member Knudtson wants the conversation on Monday to include this disparity in the market rate for reimbursement between rural and urban areas. The primary goal of the Council is to maintain the access to care, and not to promote quality at the expense of access. Member Mongeau asked who would be attending the meeting, and Senior Director Arnold responded that the meeting had been scheduled in response to the concerns of this Council, while also looking at the star ratings' effect in other rural areas, and Quality First representatives and FTF leadership would be there.

Possible Approval of SFY 2014 Funding Plan Recommendations

Director Beckett provided background information from the fiscal year 2012 ending fund balance, which includes planned amounts for sustainability. The biggest reduction over the next three years is the carry forward amount. Director Beckett advised the funding plan workgroup has three recommendations for fiscal year 2014, and she reviewed those for the Council. Director Beckett is seeking direction from the Council to prepare a draft recommendation to bring to the next meeting. Member Knudtson asked for clarification between the allotted versus the expended amounts. Director Beckett explained the allotted amount in fiscal year 2013 reflects the amount we have to award, while the awarded amount is actually under contract, e.g. the reason for the low child care health consultation amount is that we have not found a provider yet. The Council discussed the reduction in Quality First child care scholarships and the problems associated with using the market rate to calculate reimbursements. Member Knudtson would like to see a comparison between our region and the Phoenix area of child care cost as a percentage of income, since at issue is lower reimbursement rates resulting in child care centers closing. Director Beckett will follow up on this issue. Member Weiske made a motion to approve the proposed allotments and for Director Beckett to prepare a draft funding plan. Member Garcia seconded the motion. The motion carried with eight members in favor and one opposed (Knudtson).

Presentation on Expect More Arizona

Donna Davis, Senior Community Mobilizer for Expect More Arizona presented an overview of the movement. Expect More Arizona is non-partisan and offers free educational resources. The goal is to improve Arizona's educational rating so we are the best in the nation. Ms. Davis feels we can work in concert to improve the state of education, and will be providing a train the trainer at the FTF grantee coordination meeting on November 7, 2012.

Director's Report and Possible Discussion

- a. Proposed Council Meeting Calendar for 2013 – Director Beckett reviewed the proposed calendar consisting of eight meetings instead of the regular eleven. There were suggestions to rearrange some of the locations to reflect seasonal weather conditions as well as some Council members' ability to travel long distances at the beginning of the school year, and to reconsider meeting in July instead of August due to the annual Summit. Chair Frei requested the approved calendar be sent to Council members as an Outlook invitation for ease of tracking. Director Beckett will bring the final calendar reflecting the requested changes to the next meeting.
- b. SFY 2013 Financial Report – Director Beckett stated expenditures are a little behind where we want them to be; however, based on past experience we know it can be a little slow at the beginning of the fiscal year. Our finance representatives will follow up with grantees to ensure there are no issues submitting reimbursement requests.
- c. Grantee Coordination Meeting – This meeting is scheduled for November 7, 2012 at the Mohave Valley Elementary School District. We are opening this meeting up to grantees as well as any other interested partners and the Council. There will be the Expect More Arizona train the trainer, and a training on community outreach.

Director Beckett informed the Council we were awarded a \$3,050 grant from the BHHS Legacy Foundation for food and refreshments at Council meetings, grantee meetings, orientations, focus groups, etc. Thank you Legacy Foundation! Director Beckett also advised the Council that our Senior Director, Gary Arnold received the coveted Employee of the Year award at First Things First.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is at 9:30am on Thursday, December 6, 2012 at the Fort Mojave Indian Tribe Education Center located at 1599 Plantation Road, Mohave Valley, Arizona, 86440. Member Mongeau suggested we plan to have a holiday luncheon at that meeting.

Adjourn

Member Garcia made a motion to adjourn at 11:03 a.m. Member Mongeau seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

Sandy Smith, Administrative Assistant

Riley Frei, Chair